

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

the pestilence, converted all he had into ready money and fled to Massa, where he waited until he heard that it had abated. Then he returned to the city, and, drinking and laughing with his friends, began to boast that he had jockeyed God. " And, raising his eyes on high, he cried out at the top of his voice : *Thou thoughtest to catch me, Domenedio, but Thou hast not got me!* But no sooner had he said this word, than he said another in a lower tone : *Woe's me, Thou hast indeed got me, for I feel the swelling.*" And straightway he went to his house and died.¹

A fresh recruit to Catherine's mystical army at this time was a young novice of San Domenico, Fra Simone da Cortona. From his own account of himself, he was a melancholy and sensitive youth, tormented by shyness, self-consciousness, and religious scruples. While the other younger friars of the convent, for fear of infection, shrank from associating with the fathers, Raimondo, Tommaso Caffarini, and Bartolommeo, who visited the sick, Simone eagerly sought their company and joined them in their work; and they, " as though to reward me for my labour," brought him to Catherine, "which to my taste was, indeed, a magnificent reward." "O how gladly did I see her, and how eagerly did I listen to her burning words 1 Verily, for her sake, all labour was turned for me into rest." But once, when they were visiting her, the other friars forgot all about him, and left him outside; Catherine called for him, and he, abashed and mortified, would not go in. Afterwards, when they had left, Catherine said to her companions : " My son has gone away troubled, because he could not speak with me, but I will go to him this very night." He went to bed, very angry and miserable ; but she appeared to him in a dream, and gave him sweet comfort. Afterwards, when he accompanied Fra Bartolommeo, who was preaching a mission at Asciano, Catherine, fearing that the youth might again think himself neglected, always remembered him in the postscripts to the letters she addressed to the elder friar, and excused herself for not having had time to write directly to him. " Tell Frate Simone, my son

¹ *Auempio 57, Gome un uomo dlceva che Dio non Faveva gionto.* 124